

## *Dutch Oven Cooking Basics*

1. 4 Types of Dutch Oven Cooking:
  - a.) Roast - All of the heat on the bottom
  - b.) Broast - Most of the heat on the bottom: 75% - 25%
  - c.) Bake - Equal heat top and bottom
  - d.) Broil - All heat on the top
2. Roasting is for all soups and braised dishes, and for cooking whole meat (roasts) when broasting is not available.
3. Broast for all roasts and whole-meat dishes.
4. Bake for whole poultry, breads and desserts
5. Broil for pizzas, fish, desserts - usually used in conjunction of another type of cooking.
6. Temperatures:
  - a.) If you are baking at home in your oven, add 25 degrees to the specified heat.
  - b.) There is no exactness with charcoal, but a good rule of thumb is: 2 briquettes on the bottom = 25 degrees, 3 briquettes on the top = 25 degrees
  - c.) For roasting, watch for the amount of steam coming from the lid.
7. Purchasing a Dutch Oven
  - a.) Cast Iron is always superior in cooking, to aluminum
  - b.) Look for an oven with legs and a tight-fitting lid. There should be less than 1/8 " of play in the lid.
  - c.) Fancy Designs are a lot more money but don't cook any better
  - d.) The best all around size is a 12 " deep oven
8. Seasoning
  - a.) Seasoning is simply filling the cracks and pores of a Dutch Oven with oil. Seasoning is kept in place by patina - a dark layer of carbon that binds to the metal, giving it the black color.

b.) To season a Dutch Oven:

Step 1: Clean thoroughly and distress (dishwashers are great for this one time only)

Step 2: Dry thoroughly and wipe all surfaces with canola oil

Step 3: Place the Dutch Oven upside down in a 300 degree oven or a grill on medium heat for 30 minutes - the grill is preferable, since it will fill your house with smoke. Place the lid in right side up on the legs of the oven.

Step 4: Let the oven cool and wipe off excess oil

## 9. Cleaning and Storage

a.) To clean your Dutch oven, scrub thoroughly with water and a plastic scrub brush. Never use dish detergent, as it will break down the patina and seasoning. Wipe the Dutch oven dry with paper towels. I like to spray my Dutch oven with a solution of half water, half white vinegar after I have scrubbed it out.

b.) Never coat your Dutch oven with oil after cleaning! The oil will go rancid and break down the patina, causing it to cook poorly and have a bad taste.

c.) Storage: Let your Dutch oven stand open for a couple of hours to air dry before storing. Store it in a cool, dry place. If you can do so, buy a storage bag for your oven, it will be well worth the price.

10. When you are ready to use your Dutch oven, rinse it out with water, dry, and apply a little oil.

Have fun! Don't be afraid to experiment and don't worry. If you feel you have ruined a Dutch oven, just follow the steps outlined in #8 and start over. The cast iron will outlast you.